

Indiana Building Code Committee Meeting Minutes

July 30, 2013

Sterrett Center – Lawrence, IN

Participants

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Summary

1. Denise Fitzpatrick, Chairperson, opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m. and issued a sign-in sheet. Quorum established initially with 13 voting members.
2. Motion to approve minutes from last meeting by Mike Koppes, seconded by TJ Burns. Motion carried.
3. Denise introduced Kari Thompson who took Shelly's place upon Shelly's retirement.
4. John gave background on conflicts between the proposed building code and fire code. He and Commissioner Matt Mitchell had begun with an 18-page memo from staff and had reduced it to today's agenda items. Many of the items were non-substantive clerical issues that could be cleaned up and resolved without input from the committees. The agenda items are the remaining substantive issues that need committee action. If the conflicts remain after this meeting, the Commission will have to resolve them when they advertise the final proposed rule.

5. Reviewed Conflicts between the two proposed codes:

a. 903.2.3 Group E 20,000 vs. 12,000 s.f. Ralph Gerdes gave background from NFPA research, which cited lower property damage and greater resiliency and continuity of function. JH noted a study by Randy Gulley that showed minimal impact for the lower threshold in 2011 and 2012. Ralph commented that non-fire rated construction is permitted for unsprinklered schools – Mike K. quickly calculated up to 17,000 s.f. with frontage increases. He also noted that the remonstrance process has limited construction budgets for schools and when factoring in charter schools, there would be a cost increase for the lower threshold. Jim Gerstbauer noted that many chartered schools are smaller schools, and felt that 20,000 was acceptable. Bobby L. pointed out new lockdown security procedures in schools following the Sandy Hook shooting lend credence to the smaller 12,000 s.f. fire area. Jeff Dean said his experience was that smaller charter schools were more prevalent, and noted that the disruption from a fire was much greater in a non-sprinklered building. Dan Gagen noted that a day care in a church could trigger a sprinkler for the church at 12,000 s.f. fire area. Ed moved to retain 20k, Ralph seconded. Motion carried 9-5.

b. 903.3.1.1.1 Exempt locations. Motion by Mike K. to accept Fire Code language. Second by Ralph. Discussion was that this appeared to be an unascertainable standard as written by the building code. T.J. argued that sometimes the fire official needs some discretionary leeway. Motion carried with one nay.

c. Now 15 voting members were present.

d. Section 903.4.3. Floor control valves. JH explained that Commissioner Mitchell strongly supported the proposed language. Ralph felt there would be a fiscal impact. Mike K. noted that in 13R systems for 4 story apartments and lower there is often only a single valve at the main floor. This would change the design from a basket or bird-cage design to require a riser with separate valves for each floor. Jeff asked about standpipes. Mike noted that a 4-story building with less than 30 feet from F.D. access level to the fourth floor would not require a standpipe. Both Mike and Ralph agreed that it was a good suggestion, but it would have a fiscal impact. Jeff noted that he contacted a large residential developer who did not object to the change. Mike pointed out that this would reduce property damage to floors not engaged in the fire. Bobby pointed out that there is currently a conflict and that the current fire code requires the valves. Craig noted that if firemen know where the fire is, the valves will reduce damage and allow floors not involved in the fire to remain in service during renovation of the damaged apartments, far offsetting any fiscal impact of construction cost. Kyle moved, Bobby seconded to approve change to add valves. Motion carried. JH will review fiscal impact statement.

e. 904.2: Alternative fire extinguishing systems. Bobby and Kyle questioned the proposed language as redundant. Ed noted that it was simply pointing to a Commission approved standard. Motion by Dan second by Ralph to approve except change “fire code official” to “Code Official.” Motion carried.

f. John noted to Denise that references to fire code official or building code official should read “Code Official,” consistent with Indiana definitions.

g. 904.11.2 System interconnection. Jeff and TJ noted that Koorsen wanted clarification in the code that the supply fans must be shut down along with the kitchen equipment. Many noted that the hood manufacturer’s design should take precedence. Mike A. moved to not accept FC language regarding internal makeup air, but change suppression to extinguishing, Tim C. seconded. Motion carried with one nay.

h. Section 905.2 System pressures in standpipes. Mike K. noted that the proposed change by the Fire Code codifies standard practice, and allows manual wet systems. Motion by Ed to approve, second by Tim C. Motion carried.

i. Section 905.8 Dry Standpipes. Discussion that the energy code probably makes this an irrelevant issue in many cases. Tim C. moved to not accept the proposed language but add (675 IAC 13-1-8) after NFPA 14. Second by T.J. Motion carried.

j. 907.2.2.1 Smoke detection in Ambulatory Care Facilities. Ralph noted that this proposal was inconsistent with federal regulations and Indiana State Health Dept. regulations for health care occupancies. JH noted that this item was not in the original conflict memo that he and Matt Mitchell had discussed. Jeff noted that dentist offices would not be regulated as health care occupancies. Ralph and Tim C. commented that the fire area could be the entire building, and this could impose a requirement to add smoke detection in other tenant areas. Motion by Mike K. to retain current building code language as proposed. Second by Tim C. Motion carried with one abstention.

k. 907.6.3.1 Zoning Indicator Panel. The first two sentences would be deleted, as they were listed as strike-through text on the original conflict memo. Mike K. asked if “accessible at all times” meant mounted on the exterior. TJ noted that a Knox Box would provide accessibility. Bobby moved to approve as amended (striking first two sentences). Kyle seconded. Motion carried with one nay.

l. Section 912.2 The last sentence in plain type (“The location of fire department connections shall be approved by the fire chief”) should be stricken, as it was listed as strike-through text on the original conflict memo. John explained that his discussions with Jim Schmidt and Mara Snyder were that a local ordinance would be required to give local fire officials jurisdiction over placement of the FDC,

and the phrase “and located accordingly” did not pass A.G. preliminary review. Motion by Kyle to approve as amended. Second by Ralph. Motion carried with one nay.

m. 912.2.2 Motion by Jim G. to approve. References to “ Fire code official” should read “Code official.” Second by Tim C. Motion carried.

n. 912.3 Motion by Jim G. to approve. Second by Ralph. Motion carried.

o. 912.3.1 Motion by Jim G. to approve. Second by Ed. Motion carried.

p. 1004.2 Motion by Mike K. to disapprove, seconded by Ed. Mike noted that without “upon request,” temporarily increasing occupant load in an office would require a seating plan. John H. noted that the intent was probably to apply the chart requirement only to large assembly occupancies. Mike K. noted that the diagrams were already required for these by the Fire Code. Motion carried.

q. Townhouse Definition. A lengthy discussion took place regarding past and current definitions and interpretations of Townhouses. Several pointed out that the legacy interpretations have severely stifled development of affordable townhouses. Among the problems cited were the inability in many communities to create separated deeded properties for the townhomes due to zoning restrictions. Also pointed out was the problem with common utilities under multiple interpretations of current rules. The discussion continued that the new code needs to eliminate the property line requirement in BOTH the IBC and the IRC (via concurrent chase amendment to the IRC), AND have them regulated as Class 2 structures. The property line requirement is an insurmountable hurdle to Townhouse construction in many jurisdictions. Discussed the issue of common easements and many noted that this was an issue for the developer to resolve via restrictive covenants and not the building code. Motion by Kyle to keep the language as originally proposed by the building code (without the property line requirement) but add “as a Class 2 structure.” Motion carried with one nay. Motion by Bobby to amend IRC to mirror new IBC definition to delete property line.. Second by Dan Sheposh. Motion carried.

Prepared by,
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